

## Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0199

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN THE PHASES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: GAINING EASTERN AGREEMENT TO A TWO-PHASE NEGOTIATION, WITH US AND SOVIETS REDUCING FIRST AND OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS FOLLOWING IN THE SECOND PHASE REDUCTIONS, CONTINUES TO BE AN IMPORTANT WESTERN MBFR AIM. CURRENT NATO GUIDANCE ON THE SUBJECT OF WHEN PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN IS AMBIGUOUSLY FORMULATED AND ITS USE WITH THE EAST HAS PROVEN COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. THE DELEGATION CONSIDERS THAT, TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF THE WORKABILITY OF THE PHASING CONCEPT, THE WEST SHOULD ADOPT A CLEARER, MORE CONVINCING POSITION, AND THAT THE US SHOULD TAKE THE LEAD IN MAKING A PROPOSAL TO NATO ON THIS TOPIC IN THE NEAR FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

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2. DURING THE PAST ROUND OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS, THE EAST CONTINUED TO PRESS HARD FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN, ESPECIALLY FRG, PARTICIPATION IN A FIRST REDUCTION AGREEMENT. THE EAST HAS AGAIN EXPRESSED DOUBTS WHETHER, IF IT AGREES TO A FIRST PHASE REDUCTION COMPOSED OF THE US AND SOVIET FORCES ONLY, A SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS INCLUDING WEST EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS WOULD IN FACT TAKE PLACE WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME, OR AT ALL.

3. AS WASHINGTON AGENCIES WILL RECOLLECT, EARLY IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT IF THE WEST EVER EXPECTED TO GAIN EASTERN AGREEMENT TO THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF A TWO-PHASE NEGOTIATION, THE WEST WOULD, INTER ALIA, HAVE TO PROVIDE CONVINCING ASSURANCE TO THE EAST THAT PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS WOULD IN FACT TAKE PLACE. FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE AD HOC GROUP SUGGESTED, AND NATO AGREED, THAT THE ALLIES TELL THE EAST THAT THEY WERE READY TO INCLUDE IN A PHASE I AGREEMENT A PROVISION WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH THAT PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BEGIN WITHIN A FIXED PERIOD OF TIME AFTER THE END OF PHASE I NEGOTIATIONS. AFTER SAYING THIS TO THE EAST AND NOTING THE EAST'S CONTINUED SCEPTICISM THAT PHASE II WOULD TAKE PLACE, AND EASTERN REQUESTS FOR MORE SPECIFIC DETAILS, THE AD HOC GROUP ASKED FOR FURTHER NAC GUIDANCE, WHICH WOULD SPECIFY THE PERIOD. THE GROUP HOPED FOR GUIDANCE WHICH WOULD DEMONSTRATE TO THE EAST THAT IN PROPOSING THAT THERE BE A SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTIATION TO CONSIDER REDUCTIONS BY REMAINING PARTICIPANTS, THE WEST WAS ACTING IN GOOD FAITH AND WOULD MOVE PROMPTLY TO START PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS, AFTER THE EAST AGREED TO THE TWO MAIN ALLIED PRE-CONDITIONS OF WITHDRAWAL OF A SOVIET TANK ARMY AND THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT.

4. THE GUIDANCE RECEIVED, WHICH WAS THE PRODUCT OF AN UNEASY COMPROMISE WITHIN NATO, STATES ONLY THAT THE SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BEGIN AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE AFTER SIGNATURE OF A FIRST PHASE

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AGREEMENT, AND THAT THIS PERIOD NEED NOT BE LONGER THAN THE LENGTH OF TIME NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT FIRST PHASE REDUCTIONS, WHICH IN TURN SHOULD BE NO LONGER THAN 18 MONTHS.

5. THIS FORMULA HAS NOT FULFILLED ITS DESIRED FUNCTION, OF ILLUSTRATING THE WORKABILITY OF THE WESTERN SUGGESTION, THAT PARTICIPANTS AGREE ON A PROVISION OF A PHASE I

AGREEMENT WHICH WILL SPECIFY A POINT AT WHICH A PHASE II NEGOTIATION WILL START. THE FORMULA SAYS THAT THE FIXED PERIOD OF TIME WILL RUN FROM SIGNATURE OF A PHASE I AGREEMENT, BUT THEN APPEARS TO MAKE THE DURATION OF THE FIXED PERIOD OF TIME DEPENDENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PHASE I AGREEMENT, WHICH LOGICALLY COULD NOT GO INTO EFFECT UNTIL AFTER RATIFICATION OF A PHASE I AGREEMENT RATHER THAN ITS SIGNATURE. IN PRACTICE, THE PRESENT NATO FORMULA APPEARS TO MEAN THAT THE FIXED PERIOD OF TIME WOULD PROBABLY BE OF A DURATION OF APPROXIMATELY TWO YEARS OR SO. EASTERN REPS REACTED NEGATIVELY TO THE USE OF THIS FORMULATION. THEY QUESTIONED THE PRACTICABILITY OF THE WESTERN APPROACH ON THIS MATTER AND THE LONG DELAY IT COULD ENTAIL; THEY ALSO HAVE IMPLIED THAT THE FORMULATION WAS AN EFFORT TO OBFUSCATE AND DELAY PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS. SOVIET REPS HAVE POINTED OUT THAT RATIFICATION ACTION MAY BE TIME CONSUMING AND THAT ITS TIMING IS OPEN TO INFLUENCE BY GOVERNMENT DECISIONS.

6. MOREOVER, IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THE PRESENT ALLIED FORMULA DOES NOT PROVIDE A WORKABLE BASIS FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE EAST, IF THE EAST SHOULD BEGIN TO MOVE ON THE TWO-PHASE CONCEPT. BECAUSE IT DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING THE ALLIED TWO-PHASE PROPOSAL A CONVINCING ONE, IT IS INADEQUATE AS A MEANS OF RESISTING EASTERN PRESSURE FOR COMMITMENTS BY ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO REDUCTIONS IN A FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT. DISCUSSION IN THE AD HOC GROUP INDICATES THAT OUR EVALUATION OF THIS MATTER IS WIDELY SHARED.

7. WE UNDERSTAND THAT A DRAFT MESSAGE ON THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN PREPARED BY WASHINGTON AGENCIES, WHICH SPLITS  
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INTO TWO SEPARATE CONCEPTS THE PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN THE PHASES AND THE TIME REQUIRED DURING WHICH IMPLEMENTATION WOULD BE COMPLETED, AND SUGGESTS A DURATION FOR EACH. WE WOULD URGE THAT THIS MESSAGE BE APPROVED AND THAT DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT BEGIN IN NATO SOON. IN THE INTERESTS OF GAINING EASTERN ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA THAT WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS CAN BE POSTPONED TO PHASE II, IT IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO PLACE WESTERN NEGOTIATORS IN A POSITION TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND MAKE MORE CONVINCING THEIR POSITION ON PHASING. RESOR

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